

NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA FISHING REPORT

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The NW PA Fishing Report is brought to you by:



Pennsylvania's Great Lakes Region
crawford • erie • mercer • venango



Fishing with Darl Black

Information Service



During late summer, river guide Pete Cartwright knows one of the best places to catch chunky smallies is the Allegheny River

LANDING NET by Darl Black

Did I mention in the last Report that late summer can be tough fishing? Well, things have gotten tougher in the last two weeks. With the stormy weather of late, even the "guaranteed" Lake Erie bite has gone haywire; this past week, anglers have struggled on the big lake. Higher than normal water temperatures on inland waters have put some species in a negative feeding state. Check the Report for the latest info on each water. But if you just want to catch something to feel the tug, Marilyn Black gives some pointers on her three favorite finesse baits that always catch fish in this issue. And don't miss Jeff Knapp's Garmin Tip for finding big fish in deep water.

The NW PA Fishing Report provides timely angling information for Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango counties. Fishing comments and photos are offered by regional tackle shops and area anglers. The NWPAFR is based on experiences, observations and opinions of individual contributors; information is considered reliable but comments are not independently verified. In providing information or pictures, you are agreeing to your comments being edited for clarity and brevity, and posted to websites and distributed electronically.

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COUNTY BY COUNTY REPORTS

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Lake

Norm @ Jamestown Marina; filed 8/23: Too hot to fish for many anglers. The hottest bites going are catfish and yellow perch. I heard of a couple muskies being taken, too. Of course, bass anglers are catching a few largemouth as well.

Bean @ Richter's Bait & Tackle; filed 8/23: Lake fishing is very slow. Have a couple customers getting a few crappies in 14 feet of water. But reports from the tailrace of the dam indicate walleyes are routinely being caught.

Laurie @ Duck-N-Drake: Not many people out fishing. Lake temperature is 82/83 degrees. Only thing biting is catfish... but during our catfish tournament last week, not even the catfish cooperated. It was a tough night for fisherpersons with the biggest cat, a channel, going just 11 pounds. We will be holding another catfish tournament on September 25/26; stop in to register.



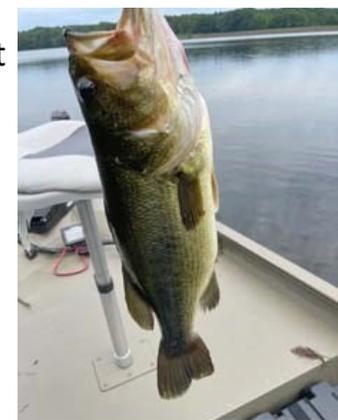
DnD Catfish Tournament

Brandi @ Poff's Place; filed 8/23: I can sum up fishing results in three words this past week – catfish, catfish, catfish. Too uncomfortable out there on the lake for anyone except the night-time catfish anglers. Good time just to take a boat ride on the lake.

Stan Tetielbaum (Ohio)

■ August 13th: It was mostly overcast and comfortable on Pymatuning today. The rain was brief. I ran a crankbait deep in couple spots on the South End without success. I caught all my bass near shallow cove with a wacky rig. The near-20-inch largemouth pictured here came around 2 pm. She was completely wrapped in green slime when I netted the fish, and I had to clean the slime away to find a good-size fish. (See photo on right)

■ August 20: It was a foggy morning on the South End of Pymatuning today. I got a couple bites around timber early, but then nothing until later in morning. This 20.5 inch largemouth came from vegetation that extended 20 feet off the shore. There was a yellowish stain to the lake from the rains. I tried fishing deeper with a swim bait on sites where I observed fish on my sonar, but no bites. (See photo on right)



Canadohta Lake and Union City Reservoir

Jerry @ Timberland Bait; filed 8/23: Well, our icebox of a lake finally warmed up enough to go swimming – that was the big activity here this past week. Fishing has been slow. The good news, however, is the fishing tournament I am holding at Union City Reservoir this Saturday, August 28. The authority which manages the water supply lake will have the gate open to drive down to the lake just for this tournament. This will be a shoreline tournament only. Register for the event at Timberland Bait this Thursday or Friday. We are going to find out what fish may lurk in Union City Reservoir. Then gear up for an ice fishing tournament at the lake this winter.

Conneaut Lake

Darl @ Blackwolfe Communications; filed 8/23: Marilyn warned me. But I went ahead and broke my rule about not fishing Conneaut Lake on a summer weekend. I was quickly reminded why not to do that on a Saturday or Sunday. However, summer was running out and I wanted to get on the deep-water big 'gill and 'seed action on points and offshore humps before they moved – which is typically the first week of September.

Well, it appears they may have already moved. Between being tossed around like a wayward bobber amid huge swells resulting from heavy speedboat traffic, my Garmin did not register any pan-fish schools on deep-water humps. Had to settle for some run-of-the-mill bluegills feeding on the surface above the cut weeds. (See photo) on right



ERIE COUNTY

Lake Erie

Jeff @ Poor Richards; filed 8/23: The last 4 or 5 days have not been so good for the average walleye fisherman. The storm apparently scattered the fish – some shallow as 35 feet, some deep as 80 feet– none of them in a strong feeding mode. The small boat guys have been spending most their time on the water trying to figure out where the walleyes went and how to get them to bite. However, there is word from those fishing 65 to 75 feet that steelhead are moving into depth range. Still, with lake temperature still 76 degrees, there will need to be a significant cool down before we see steelhead in front of the creeks.

Kirk @ East End Angler; filed 8/23: There are perch out there on the East Side in 58 to 62 feet of water off the W's, off Shorewood, off Shades, off The Cribs, and off the Lighthouse. I've been to all those spots and saw them on the sonar. However, the perch are not biting. Those that are being caught spit up massive amounts of something brownish – some sort of invasive species, I'm told. Perch are filling up on these critters rather than minnows. The lake rolled over last week with all the stormy weather. Walleyes have scattered. Suddenly it's hard to catch a limit. I'm getting positive reports from old-time anglers who are drifting a single blade crawler harness in shallower water and catching decent numbers of 'eyes. Also talked to someone who goes out of NE Marina; he said they are catching steelhead and some coho out in the really deep water. No one can tell me where the coho are coming from.

Captain Bob @ Perch Pirate; filed 8/23: The bite has nosedived for us on the head boat since the stormy weather rolled the lake over. We have been trying different areas and depths each trip, but always end up at the Dump to scrounge up a mixed bag of walleye, bass and a few perch for customers.

Erie County—Presque Isle Bay continued



Darl @ Blackwolfe Communications; filed 8/23: Took a ½ day trip to PIB last week before the storms – just to see what we might catch in the Bay. Stumbled into a couple small smallmouth while looking for deep-water bluegills,



then ended the trip catching bluegills and small crappies on the outside weed edge in Marina Lake. (See photos)

MERCER COUNTY

Shenango Lake



Ken Smith (Sharon); filed 8/23: Spent all my time this month and last month on three areas on Shenango Lake trying to improve my knowledge about crappie migration in the summer on this lake. Rising water, high water and falling water – we had all three. I figured out patterns for each of them. I was very successful in doing so, averaging four days a week for the last two months, I caught over a 1,000 fish. That doesn't include what the guys that were fishing me caught. Time on the water is truly the best teacher on how to catch your favorite fish.

On Aug 20, I fished Shenango with my best fishing buddy Tim Odem. We started at 7 AM and had 20 keepers in the box by 8:15. We caught close to 40 crappies to get our first limit of keepers. We finished the morning at 10:30 with 30 keepers in the box. Hang gliding produced most of the fish, but a slip bobber and small jighead with a Bobby Garland Baby Shad was also deadly. Baits tipped with a Nibble produced better than without one. Looking to head up to Lake Erie as soon as the weather allows my smaller boat to do so safely. (See photo from August outing)

Randy @ Fish West PA; filed 8/23: Shenango Lake water temp was 87 degrees today, Monday, Aug 23. That is too high for hybrid striper activity, and puts them in a negative mood. Looking ahead for this coming week, no cool down in sight. Instead, daytime temps in high 80s approaching 90 degrees! However, there is a circumstance which happens in the summer that can turn these fish on for a day or two – heavy rain in the

watershed that brings an influx of water into the reservoir. The bite is on the Orangeville arm of Shenango Lake right below the state line can be awesome – but it's a matter of timing. Hybrids move up from the lake, feed in the current for a day or two, then disappear as water recedes. (Editor: Yep, you should have been there last week after Fred – literally. See photos on right)



VENANGO COUNTY

Allegheny River

Pete @ smalliesontheYough.com; filed 8/23: We had a good day on the Allegheny a couple weeks back, around the 12th. We started out well catching smallies the first hour or so, then the storms moved in. We took a break. After the lightning passed but it was still raining, we headed back out. The fish were still active and we caught a bunch in the rain using a variety of soft plastic from Fishing Online. I Still have open dates for guide trips going into the fall. (See photos below)

Jeff @ Keystone Connection Guide Service; filed 8/23: On august 21, we experienced good action for smallmouth bass on the middle Allegheny River prior to the arrival of the rainfall associated with Tropical Storm Fred. Numbers were good, with majority of fish running 12 to 16inches. Rapala X-Raps, were the most consistent producer, followed by flukes and Galida's Grubz. With river running high and discolored, I suspect spinner-baits and thumper tail soft swimbaits will prevail until clearer water returns. (See photo) Editor: Jeff resumes guide trips this week on the river. Call now to book end of summer or fall trip. (See photo below)



Jeff Knapp photo



Pete Cartwright photo



Pete Cartwright photo

Lures That Are Fun to Fish Because They Catch Everything

By Marilyn Black



I've been fishing for roughly 50 years, including about a ten-year stint participating in bass tournaments. But I'm not hooked on any one species of fish. I like to catch them all. That's the key – catching something to Feel the tug!

So, if “catching” becomes particularly difficult – like it is this time of year – might I suggest trying a trio of baits which will draw strikes from a variety of species. Give me Beetle Spin, Galida's Grubz and a Ned Rig, and I will catch something. These are baits that attract every gamefish and panfish...rock bass to white bass, bluegills to walleyes. Like I said, I don't care what I catch; I'm in it for the fun.

I fish all these baits on a 7' light action spinning rod spooled with six-pound Gamma Edge. With Gamma Edge I have the confidence to battle just about anything that swims in our waters – and expect to win the battle. Well, everything except a big flathead catfish or an oversized musky that swallows my small bait!

Giving off plenty of predator-attracting flash and thump, Beetle Spins are fished slowly and steady. The 1/32 and 1/16-ounce sizes are perfect for trout and panfish while a 1/8 or ¼-ounce size is a meal for bass, crappies, walleyes, white bass, pike and more. These safety-spin spinners are great for somewhat dingy water or when rains muddy the shallows.



For a really tough bite in clear water, a simple 4" Galida's Grubz on a 1/8-ounce or 3/16-ounce leadhead can be fished very slowly. It's hard to beat Smoke or Purple Fizz for clear water, bright sun conditions. A Grubz is particularly effective in cooler water of spring and early summer, or anytime gamefish seem to get lockjaw. In the river, a

green pumpkin Galida's Grubz is a year-round bait for inactive fish. Count it down and retrieve slowly.



The Ned Rig is relatively new to my arsenal, having only fished it for about four years. The thing with the Ned is there isn't any wrong way to fish it. Drag along the bottom, hop it, swim it like a grub, or simply rest it in place on the bottom and quiver the rod tip. Bass absolutely love 'em, followed by walleyes, crappies, perch and big panfish. I've even caught small musky with it during the winter. I use the official Ned Heads in those odd sizes, but built with a quality thin wire hook. I favor the 3" Yum Dinger as the bait on the Ned Rig. If the head of the Dinger gets torn, save the ripped bait when you replace it. Then cut the ripped bait into a one or two-inch section to use for crappie and panfish on the smallest Ned head.

So, when the bit is tough, simply go small for the tug!



Area Guide Services contribute to the NW PA Fishing Report

Looking for a trip on a Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango county water?
Check them out!

Dutch Fork Guide Service: Lake Erie Walleye trolling, casting and jigging. Keith Eshbaugh; 724-884-3977; www.dutchforkcustomlures.com

Keystone Connection Guide Service: Allegheny River Smallmouth, Walleye and Musky plus Pymatuning Walleye. Jeff Knapp; 724-902-6082; keystone-connectionguideservice@gmail.com; www.facebook.com/keystoneconnectionguideservice.

Smallies on the Yough LLC: wading for Smallmouth Bass on the Yough River, Allegheny River and other streams. Pete Cartwright; 412-215-6254; pete@smalliesontheyough.com; www.facebook.com/smalliesontheyough/.

Wildwood Outfitters: Fly fishing for Trout, Steelhead and other species. Nick DelVecchio; www.wildwoodoutfitterspa.com/; www.facebook.com/wildwoodoutfitters.

Bo's Guide Service: Specializing in panfish in area lakes and kayak swamp trips for bowfin. Bo Bartholomew at bcbaitshadley@gmail.com

Names drawn for prizes as follows. To claim your prize, you must contact Darl by email with your shipping address. Otherwise, prize goes back in the drawing.

Spool of Gamma Line: Ken Smith

Lure pack: Evan Komoroski

Cover photo—pack of Galida's Grubz: Pete Cartwright

The Livewell

Brought to you by:
Wiegel Brothers Marine
704 1/2 Elk Street
Franklin, PA 16323
Phone 814-437-2077



Email: Debbie@riverjetpro.com



Evan Komoroski, age 12, North Pier at PIB—his first Erie smallmouth



Keith takes day off Erie walleye go for SMB on the Allegheny River

Pymatuning catfish are biting. Check out Duck N Drake Catfish Tourney weigh-in.





Black Knight Industries

Oil City, PA 16301

www.gammafishing.com

Gamma Line may be found locally at the following tackle shops:

- Consumer Direct Sports (CDS) near Grove City Outlet Mall
- Maurer's Trading Post, Franklin, PA
- East End Angler, Harborcreek, PA; 814-898-3474

GAMMA TIP

Gus Glasgow: This has been an unbelievable year for our participation in crappie tournaments. Dan Druschel and I fished the FBC Linesville Fishing Tournament at Pymatuning Lake a week ago. We were able to capture 1st place and big fish honors. This was truly an awesome event, awesome competitors, ran by amazing people and awesome prizes. Gamma Line and Garmin contributed to our great success this season.



Editor's note: In a future issue of Fishing Report, Gus will review their year of competitive crappie fishing and detail the role of Garmin and Gamma Line in their success.

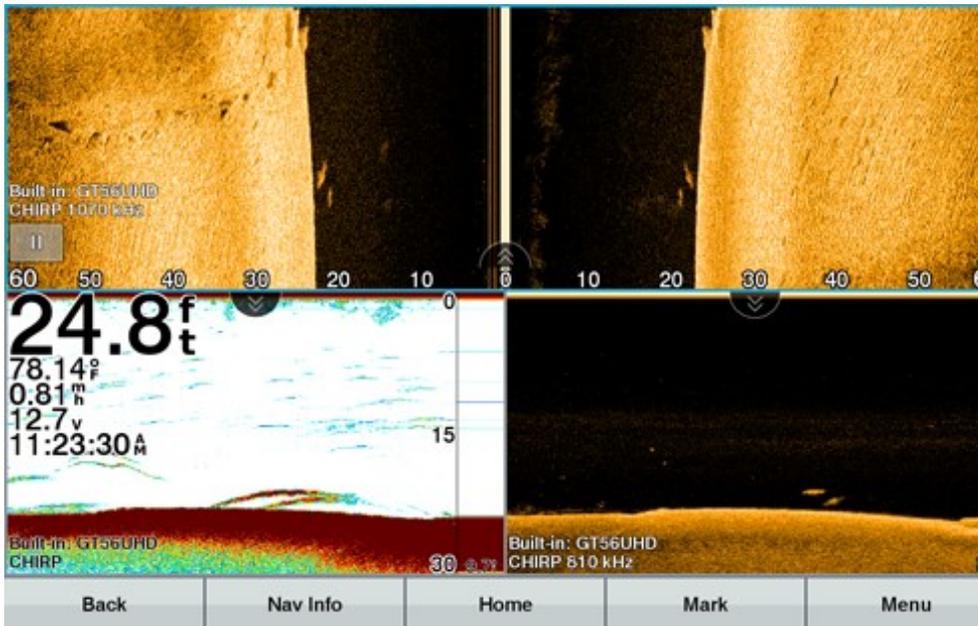
GARMIN INFORMATION PAGE

- Real anglers share actual fishing experiences with Garmin units
- For professional local installation of Garmin units, contact G&G Marine Electronics at 724-290-9045



GARMIN TIP from Jeff Knapp:

As summer heat continues to warm elevated water temperatures, a portion of lake dwelling walleyes move into deeper water. This is especially true on deep, clear water lakes that feature dissolved oxygen in and below the thermocline. Thanks to the excellent detail provided by Garmin Marine Echomap units, an angler can spend his or her time putting baits in front of fish, rather than randomly fishing “good looking spots” and hoping for the best. When walleyes are holding in 25 to 30 feet of water, they mark well on both traditional 2D and Clear Vu (down imaging) sonar. Consider the wealth of information the accompanying screenshot provides. 2D and Clear Vu reveal at least two good-size walleyes holding just off the bottom along with baitfish. Clear Vu shows the thermocline starting in 14-15 feet of water. The 2D shows a marked bottom hardness transition (as maroon band thickens). And Side Vu shows the line of rocks responsible for the increase in bottom hardness, all valuable information when attempting to determine the kind of structure and depth walleyes are holding in.



27" eye from 25 feet.